

School Committee Meeting Minutes
Shirley Middle School
June 22, 2004

Present: Hugh Muffoletto, Vice Chairperson
Paul Wilson
Bob Prescott
Don Parker

Also Present: Dr. Thomas Scott, Superintendent
Sylvia Jordan, Middle School Principal
Joe Deguglielmo, DEAC
Wally Lange, DEAC
Sharon DiPasquale, Behavior Intervention Specialist
Ritchie Cummings, Ed Tech Teacher

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

Public Participation:

As there was none, the committee moved forward to discuss Old Business.

Old Business:

Mr. Muffoletto motioned for the committee to review the minutes of the May 11, 24, 25 and June 8, 2004 meetings. A motion was made to approve the minutes of May 11, 2004. The motion was seconded and approved. A motion was made to approve the minutes of May 24, 2004. The motion was seconded and approved. Mr. Muffoletto indicated that he was not the person who seconded his nomination to Vice-Chairperson at the May 25 meeting. The minutes of that meeting will be corrected to reflect Mr. Prescott as the one who seconded the motion. A motion was made to approve the minutes of the June 8 meeting. The motion was seconded and approved.

Business Affairs:

Dr. Scott reviewed Payables warrant 453 and Payroll warrants 349 and 849. Payables warrant 455 was presented for the committee members to sign.

New Business:

Sylvia Jordan introduced members of the school council to the committee. She, along with the council, reviewed the school improvement plan for Shirley Middle School. It was noted that the document is a "living document" where pieces of information will be changed when information becomes available, especially with respect to MCAS scores. Each major subject is included in the targeted areas. The needs and goals of each target area, as well as the objectives or strategies required for achievement, were listed for each. Primary responsibility for accomplishing these goals, the timeline required and their

impact on the budget were also included. Mrs. Jordan indicated that there were some new programs that would be implemented as early as this summer, like the summer reading program, as well as an MCAS honor ceremony to recognize those students who performed well on the tests. Curriculum mapping and standardized testing, in addition to MCAS, would be utilized to gauge the progress of the students.

Sharon DiPasquale spoke of the truancy situation – overall the numbers are down. However, there is a need to work with a truancy alliance to target those students that are not benefiting from teacher intervention. She also discussed the need for a counselor at the middle school. It is the council's belief that a counselor would be helpful in assisting with student crises. Mrs. DiPasquale informed the committee of the success of the newly implemented peer mediation program. Since February there have been 65 mediations as well as interest from faculty to be trained in mediation.

The committee complimented the council on their hard work in preparing such a complete and thorough document. A motion was made to approve the plan. Mr. Muffoletto motioned to table to approval until the next meeting. The motion was seconded. The acceptance of the Shirley Middle School Improvement Plan will be tabled until the next meeting.

Walter Lange, Devens Educational Advisory Committee chairman, introduced himself and several other members of DEAC to the school committee. He briefly discussed the current situation that Devens residents are facing and their commitment to the quality education of their children. He also reviewed the current options under consideration for the education of their children. These include various ways that the children could be educated: non-operating district (their current situation), regionalization, operating district or charter school. Mr. Lange also indicated that MassDevelopment has promised them a building to be utilized for education. Mr. Lange posed the questions that are currently facing DEAC: what should this building be used for and is there a way that this facility could benefit the surrounding communities?

The committee decided to hold meetings during the summer months on July 20, 2004 and August 24, 2004.

Before moving on to discuss further items, Mr. Muffoletto suggested that it might be a good idea to form a budget sub-committee. This committee could be comprised of community members (both parents and non-parents), school committee members, finance committee members and administrators. This committee could work on ways to better inform the community of the school's financial situation.

Correspondence:

A thank you letter will be sent to the American Legion for the donation of an American flag to Shirley Middle School. Mr. Muffoletto read the letter to those in attendance.

Information:

Dr. Scott informed the committee that the grade 3 MCAS results showed a 9% increase in the number of students scoring in the “proficient” range. Only 2 students received a “warning” score, down from 8 students last year.

Dr. Scott also discussed the MASC Management Information for School Committee report. He indicated that the information would be helpful in the upcoming teacher contract negotiations.

Dr. Scott mentioned that the interviews for the Director of Instruction position are scheduled for June 29. He asked that a committee member be available to join the interview committee. Mr. Parker volunteered to be part of the committee.

Dr. Scott asked that the committee reconsider the implementation of a remedial program at the elementary level. This program was to be in lieu of the elementary behavior intervention specialist position that was eliminated for FY05. It is believed that the available funding would be better utilized to hire a guidance counselor for the elementary students. Mr. Prescott motioned to approve the hiring of a guidance counselor, to be funded with money received from Devens. Mr. Muffoletto seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Before the meeting adjourned, Dr. Scott asked if any of the school committee members might be available to greet voters at the override election on June 29, 2004. All members said that they might be available to assist.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Karen Gutheil